

The Nature Connection

By Tricia Wilson

There is growing evidence that a child's direct exposure to nature is essential for their health, both physically and emotionally. The impacts include increased self-confidence, self-esteem, optimism, independence, and autonomy (Louv, R., 2008). From my observations as an educator for over 20 years, and a parent of four children and four grandchildren, I have experienced firsthand how children who have plenty of opportunities to play in nature are happier, healthier and more resilient individuals. "Studies show outdoor time helps children grow lean and strong, enhances imaginations and attention spans, decreases aggression, and boosts classroom performance. In addition, children who spend time in nature regularly are shown to become better stewards of the environment." (NWF, n.d.).

When a child has many opportunities to play outside, beyond the neighborhood playground, their minds are stimulated by nearly everything around them. They learn how to explore, concentrate, collect, sort, experiment, build and create. These outdoor experiences help to develop a child's curiosity, love of learning and discovery, the ability to follow simple instructions, promoting personal initiative and a nurturing sense of self.

Richard Louv, nature activist and author coined the term "nature-deficit disorder" which he used to describe children that have had minimal exposure to the natural world. Based on many studies on this subject, he believes a child's disconnect with nature and devaluing of independent play contribute to a diminished use of the senses and promotes attention difficulties, conditions of obesity, and higher rates of emotional and physical illnesses. (Louv, R., 2007). Unfortunately, this nature disconnection also weakens ecological literacy and stewardship of the natural world.

All parents want their children to develop into happy, healthy adults. A growing body of research demonstrates that a strong connection to the natural environment and our earth plays an important role in helping parents to achieve this. Summer is the perfect time to plan some "back to nature" activities and experiences with your children that will have lasting impacts for a lifetime.

Nature Guide Books for Parents

The Green Hour: A Daily Dose of Nature for Happier, Healthier, Smarter Kids
by Todd Christopher

Vitamin N: The Essential Guide to a Nature-Rich Life by Richard Louv

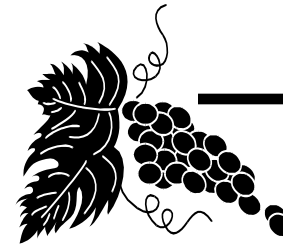
The Nature Connection: An Outdoor Workbook for Kids, Families, and Classrooms
by Clare Walker Leslie

The Kids' Outdoor Adventure Book: 448 Great Things to Do in Nature Before You Grow Up
by Stacy Tornio & Ken Keffer

Fun with Nature: Take Along Guide by Dendy, Leslie, Burns, Diane

Nature Books for Children

Butterfly Park by Elly Mackay, Why Do We Need Bees? By Usborne books, We Are the Gardeners by Joanna Gaines, Why Should I Recycle? By Jen Green, Compost Stew: An A to Z Recipe for the Earth



The Grapevine

Winter Park Presbyterian Preschool
400 South Lakemont Avenue
Winter Park, FL 32792

Congratulations VPK Class of 2022!

ALLIGATORS

Jacob Bell
Parker Creasman
Penny Fraebel
Indy Hall
Leland Henderson
Rose Holderness
Elliott Kupke
David Natera
Maroun
Britt Petersen
River Reece
Savannah Rothell
Madeleine Schilp
Nora Seidl
Lucy Tatro
Jack Wallens
Olivia Weckele
Wilson Woods

DOLPHINS

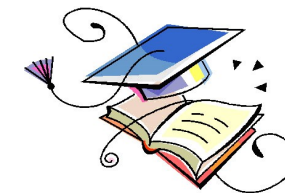
Bori Bibok
Sebastian Ellison
Grace Gloden
Ansley Incinelli
Andrew Kravchuk
Ryan Matthes
Lily Noe
Caroline
Paglialonga
Lionel Portillo
Eloise Schrimsher

KOALAS

Mace Campbell
Pearson Fierstein
Ansley Flositz
Sophia Kolak
Cameron Lenz
Kaydence Lora
Leah Macak
Bennah Macedo
Bree Moore
Athena Nguyen
Louie Perez
Thea Rojas
Anna Tarasova
Jude Vandermay
Zachary Walsh

LLAMAS

Moses Bui
Kennedy Carr
Ella De Camps
Valentino Gomez
Ireland Grantham
Elijah Holland
Mason Morales
Hunter Seidule
Kate Statz
Nora Waterbury
Natalie Williams



Preschool VPK Chapel Celebration Wednesday, May 18 12:00-1:00 p.m.

On Wednesday, May 18th at noon, we will celebrate our 53 VPK students at a very special VPK Chapel Celebration. Each of the four classes will perform lovely songs they have learned during the school year. Then all four groups will gather on the altar to sing one last song together. The Director and the Associate Pastor will present each child with a Bible and a cross necklace. We will adjourn to the Fellowship Hall for cake and juice. We will truly miss these wonderful children. Thank you for sharing them with us!

Important Information



Information Packets for 2022-2023 School Year

Packets for the 2022-23 school year will be mailed to families at the end of June. If you have not received your packets by mid-July, please contact the office.

If you have moved and we do not have your updated address, please call the office to let us know ASAP.

Winter Park Presbyterian Church Welcomes All Pre-school Families on Sunday May 15

On Sunday, May 15 at 10:30 a.m. WPPC is sponsoring a VPK Graduation Sunday and May Day Play Day event for our preschool families. Our VPK students will be honored and will perform a few songs during the service.

Immediately following from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. please join us for lunch and May Day Play Day activities. Enjoy hotdogs, chips, cookies, drinks and Kelly's Homemade Ice Cream for lunch. Activities include bounce houses for toddlers and preschool age children, PJ the Clown's balloon creations, face painting by Ms. Jessica Valentin and Ms. Alea, and Mrs. Kearney's fabulous obstacle course.

Please R.S.V.P. by contacting the

Calendar Highlights

May

- Tuesday, May 10: Class Water Days begin and run through May 24
- Sunday, May 15: VPK Graduation Sunday & May Day Play Day Event
- Wednesday, May 18: VPK Chapel Celebration
- Thursday, May 19: PAC Zoom meeting
- Wednesday, May 25: Last Day of School/**no extended day**

June

- Monday, June 6: First Day of Summer Camp
- Monday, July 4: Happy Independence Day!/**preschool closed all week**
- Tuesday, July 5-8: **Preschool closed/Vacation Bible School** (Church sponsored camp)

July

- Monday, July 11: Summer Camp Resumes
- Friday, July 22: Last Day of Summer Camp

August

- Monday, August 1: Teachers return
- Tuesday, August 9: Meet Your Teacher Event (more info to come in your fall packet)
- Wednesday, August 10: First day of school

We Are Grateful for Our Families



Thanks to Our Volunteers!

Thank you to all of our PAC parents and families for supporting the school, teachers, staff and children this year!

We thoroughly enjoyed all the wonderful events and activities our PAC Committee planned and initiated this year with the help of parents and administrative staff: Visit with Santa, Amazon Teacher Wish List, Kelly's Ice Cream Truck visits, Boon Supply Catalog Fundraiser, two Scholastic Book Fairs, Fall and Spring Clean-up Day, CSS Canned Goods Mission collection, Christmas cards and wreaths for Senior Centers, Kick Off to Kindergarten and Teacher Appreciation Week. What an exciting year it has been with all these special events!

We want to say a special THANK YOU to Lauren Kennedy, our PAC Chairperson. She has gone to great lengths to ensure that every event was seamless. Lauren, we could not have done it without you! Lauren's daughter, Pearson is graduating from VPK this school year, so we must say a fond farewell to both of them. Thanks again Lauren for your amazing support

this year! It has been a pleasure working with you. Our final PAC Meeting for the year will be Thursday, May 19 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. We will be discussing the upcoming school year and open PAC positions. If you are interested in joining the meeting please email Lauren Kennedy at laurenreakennedy@yahoo.com.

It's not too late to order class and individual photos taken by Katie Kaufman!

Simply log in to galleries.photoday.io then click the + my galleries. Type in WPPP0322.

When ordering class photos use 7 x 5 (not 5 x 7) or 10 x 8 (not 8 x 10) on the print product price list. This is only for class photos which are horizontal.

You can custom crop your images and mix poses in packages. Order soon and receive a free digital with a package purchase.

Contact Katie Kaufman if you have any questions katiekaufmanphotography@gmail.com or call 407-808-1606.

Health Alert!

Illnesses that typically do not appear this time of year are circulating in the community and finding their way into the preschool. Our families have had cases of hand, foot & mouth disease, flu, impetigo, norovirus and covid in recent weeks. We are nearing the end of the school year and nobody wants to miss out on the fun, but we ask that you please keep your child home if they display any symptoms of illness including fatigue, lethargy, loss of appetite, unidentified rash, or other symptoms listed on our Health Guidelines which can be found on our website winppc.org/preschool. Thank you!